Goods imported into India are liable to pay basic customs duty, countervailing duty and special customs duty. The counter-vailing duty is equivalent to the duty of Central Excise imposed on like goods manufactured or produced in India. In view of this, the imported goods would bear invariably higher rate of duty than similar goods produced in India.

(c) and (d) The export product has to be competitive in the international market and the inputs for such exports products have to be sourced at most competitive prices whether domestically or from any other country.

Customs appraisal for import of goods

449. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:
DR. MOHAN BABU:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a major change in policy with regard to the customs appraisal for import of goods;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to assign companies for the pre-shipment inspection; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to check the misuse of the schemes?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHAN HEGDE) (a) to (c) Complaints have been received from time to time about under-valuation and misclassification of imported goods leading to loss of revenue as also undue delays in cargo clearance at the ports and airports. With a view to overcoming these problems, Government have been considering several measures, one of which was the setting up of the Directorate of valuation to disseminate information on international prices and also monitor valuation practices in the Customs formations. One of the suggestions that come up for consideration in this regard was the use of pre-shipment inspection for ensuring correct classification and valuation of imported goods. No decision has been taken in the mattter.

Decline in exports

450. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate of growth of export was considerably less than the target fixed for the year 1997-98;

(b) if so, the details and reasons therefor; and

(c) the corrective steps proposed to be taken to increase the exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHAN HEGDE) (a) As per the provisional data of DGCI&S the rate of growth of export during 1997-98 was 2.64% in dollar terms and 7.5% in rupee terms and is lower than the target set for the year 1997-98.

(b) Export performance is influenced inter-alia by international market conditions, export competitiveness of domestic industry, supporting infrastructure, policy framework etc. During 1997-98 exports were affected due to general slow down in world trade and especially the recession in many countries in South East Asia including Japan, supply side constraints in some sectors and slow erosion of competitiveness.

(c) Export promotion measures are continuously being taken by the Government through changes in policies and procedures for providing an export friendly environment, involvement of States in export Promotion and consultation with trade and industry. The Government is according high priority to exports and all necessary steps are being taken to put exports on high growth trajectory.

Anti-dumping Duty on Import of Steel

451. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the steel manufacturers in the country including SAIL have complained that the import of cheaper hot-rolled coils from South Korea, South Africa and Turkey have cut into their market shares locally and in the export markets and have demanded an anti-dumping duty on import from these countries; and

(b) if so, details thereof and the Government's reaction thereto?

The Minister of Commerce (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes Sir.

A petition was received by the Designated Authority for imposition of anti-dumping duties on import of HR Coils from South Korea, South Africa and Turkey.

(b) Since the petition was not properly documented, the petitioners were asked to furnish full details. The case was subsequently closed as no response was received from the petitioner industry.

Impact of Exim Policy of SSIs

452. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that majority of 340 items shifted of OGL list are being produced by the small scale industry and as such the new Exim Policy would hit hard the SSI sector; and

(b) if so, the details and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) Out of 340 items shifted to OGL, only 57 items are having small scale angle either due to their reservation for manufacture in the small scale sector or having strong SSI production base. Further, 50 out of these 57 items were already importable against transferable SIL (Special Import Licence). The actual import of these 50 items during 1997-98 (upto November, 1997) was only approx. Rs. 28 crores. The Customs duty on imports provides safeguard to the SSI Sector.

Quality of Marine Products Exports

453. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the European union insisted on quality of the marine product exports;

(b) if so, the steps taken to strengthen the Export Inspection Agency to inspect the marine products;

(c) whether it is fact that persons working in the inspection of other export items including engineering, transferred to the inspection of marine products; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Necessary traning programmes have been organised for the concerned technical officials working in Export Inspection Council (EIC)/ Export Inspection Agencies (EIAs) and the laboratory facilities of Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) are also now being utilised for the inspection and testing of marine products processed by the fishery product processing units for exports.

The Export Inspection Council has also prepared and circulated comprehensive guidelines and instructions in the form of "Quality Assurance and Monitoring System Manual on exports of fresh, frozen processed fish and fishery products" for the guidance and use of the inspecting officers of Export Inspection Agencies.

The Government of India have also introduced a two tier system for inspection of the fishery product processing units for exporting to the European Union. The initial recommendations of an Inter-Departmental Panel (IDP) consisting of technical officials drawn from the Marine Product Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Export Inspect Agencies (EIAs) and Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) are got super-checked by a Supervisory Audit Team (SAT) consisting of officials senior to the members of the IDP and only such units as are cleared by the above two tier inspection, are then approved by Export Inspection Council for exporting to European Union. The approved fishery product processing units are then monitored regularly by the inspecting officers of the Export Inspection Agency.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, depending on the exigencies of work, the services of some of the officials working in Export Inspection Agencies/Export Inspection Council could be utilised for the inspection of marine products after giving them suitable training in Inspection/ Testing of marine products.